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Parliamentarians for East Timor

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DOCUMENTAÇÃO

OCCASIONAL NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 1990

PET Mission to the UN

In April 1990, PET asked UN Secretary General, Peres de Cuellar for an appointment to discuss East Timor. He agreed to receive a mission and an appointment was fixed for 31 August. However, it was then cancelled by the Secretary General due to "unforeseen change in travel plans" and PET was asked to propose another date. Alternative dates have been suggested in October or early November.

The following extracts are from a letter sent to the Secretary General by Lord Avebury on 16 August:

"We were very sorry to receive a message from your appointments secretary to say that after all you would be unable to meet us on August 31 as planned, though we can understand that you have other pressing matters on your agenda, with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in particular requiring your attention.

"Ironically, however, the Kuwait problem illustrates one of the points we would seek to make: that if the international community allows an aggressor to hold on to territorial gains secured by the use of military force, it serves to encourage other imperialists to expand their dominions. There has been hardly any pressure on you to complete the task assigned to you by Resolution 37\30 of November 1982, and even the Portuguese have been happy to leave matters to your absolute discretion. The Portuguese Foreign Minister said in a recent interview:

'The Secretary General being responsible for the mandate entrusted to him by the General Assembly, it is for him to decide on his own action, on which interlocutors will be included in the consultations and on the opportune moment for their intervention in the process. We do not consider it necessary at the moment to raise the subject with Secretary General Peres de Cuellar.'

"We have been concerned to note that for several years, consultations have focused on the proposed visit to East Timor by a group of Portuguese parliamentarians. We understand that the negotiations on this matter are at risk of being broken off, and it seems to us that the visit was a convenient ploy by the Indonesians to avoid discussing substantive issues....

"What has concerned us deeply ... is your omission to bring the people of East Timor into your consultations, or even to agree that they are the most important of 'all parties directly concerned', within the meaning of Resolution 37\30. We have tried to draw you on this in our correspondence over the years, for instance when we conveyed the message from Xanana saying that he would be prepared to meet you at a place of your own choosing, and again when we asked you to respond favourably to Bishop Belo's request for a referendum.

"... (T)he peoples who were formerly colonies of European powers have almost all exercised their right, through either a plebiscite or a vote of an assembly elected under universal adult franchise. The negotiations you have been conducting over the last eight years appear to us to have ignored this fundamental principle and we would like to ask you why the people of East Timor are being denied the privilege accorded to other former European colonies.

"East Timor is of course a tiny speck on the map of the world and Indonesia is a populous and powerful state with which other nations would like to have good relations. Some want to sell arms to the Jakarta regime, others would like to exploit the mineral wealth of the archipelago and the US has seen Indonesia as a regional bulwark against communism. But if the world turns a blind eye to aggression and flouts a principle the General Assembly has reiterated on many occasions, the hopes of a world order based on the rule of law are diminished. We cannot, we must not allow dictators to enjoy the proceeds of their crimes."

LISBON ON KUWAIT AND EAST TIMOR

Dr Cavaco Silva, the Portuguese Prime Minister said on 14 September that Indonesia's intervention in East Timor 15 years ago was just as serious as Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

We have to go on putting pressure on the international community so that the people of Timor can have some hope

of being able to decide their own future. All our ambassadors have clear instructions on how to proceed in making the connection between this violation of international law, of which the world is fully aware, and that other violation which it sometimes wants to forget.

The Prime Minister's statement came on the eve of another consultation with Indonesia at the UN. It is not known whether the negotiations about the Portuguese parliamentary mission to East Timor will again be on the agenda. In any case, plans for a visit this year have been abandoned because of the onset of the rainy season.

HUNDREDS PROTEST AGAIN IN DILI

On 4 September, hundreds of East Timorese demonstrated in favour of independence with banners saying, "Independence for East Timor!", "Long Live Fretilin!", "Long Live the Maubere People" and "Long Live Xanana!" The demonstration occurred at the end of a Mass in Lecideri, commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Dili Diocese. Mgr Canallini, the Apostolic Nuncio in Jakarta, was present at the Mass.

As it drew to a close at 5.30 pm, the demonstration began, with the support of many people among the more than 20,000 people present. The demonstrators called Mgr Canallini to make a statement clarifying the Vatican's stand on the position of East Timor. [There are rumours circulating in East Timor that the Vatican may shortly switch its position and support East Timor's integration into Indonesia.] The demonstration continued for half an hour.

When Mgr Canallini left the scene at about 6.00 pm, the demonstrators left. On their way home, scuffles broke out between demonstrators and Indonesians whom they encountered on the streets. When troops arrived to push the demonstrators back, they were pelted with stones.

Arrests

After the demonstration came crackdown. The first arrests occurred on 6 September, with more following on 10 and 13 September. Sources in Dili say that the situation is very tense, with Indonesian soldiers in civilian clothing roaming the streets beating up people with batons and iron bars, making it dangerous for Timorese to venture out after dark.

MPs PETITION UN DECOLONISATION COMMITTEE

Four PET members addressed the UN Decolonisation Committee in August this year: Yasuko Takemura (Japan), Ray Funk (Canada), Laurie Ferguson (Australia) and Rui Jose Santos Silva (Portugal). Two other parliamentarians also spoke, Antonia Maria Pereira and Raul Fernando Souselo de Brito, both from Portugal.

All condemned persistent violations of human rights in East Timor and called on the UN to attend to the question of East Timor's self-determination as a matter of urgency.

Yasuko Takemura (Japan), one of 87 Diet members of PET, said the East Timorese as the "primary party" involved should be included in the UN negotiations. She drew attention to Indonesia's population control programme in East Timor which "is forcibly carried out in spite of the fact that one-third of the population there have died under the Indonesian occupation" and which Timorese women regard as "a form of genocide". Japanese PET members regret Japan's own invasion of East Timor in the 1940s and felt compelled to attend the UN on the anniversary of the bombing of Nagasaki, when she would normally be participating in the nation-wide prayer for peace because "Indonesia is repeating the same sin as we committed in the past." She said Japan has not given *de jure* recognition to integration; all maps and globes at the Japanese Foreign Ministry have a line separating East Timor from Indonesia.

Ray Funk (Canada) asked why, when the desire of the East Timorese to determine their own destiny was undeniable, had nations "silently acquiesced" to Indonesia's occupation. Too few were aware of the plight of East Timor while economic and geopolitical considerations have taken precedence. Canada's record was "very disappointing" as the third largest investor in Indonesia. He attacked Western governments for being "only too happy" to sell arms and lend money to Indonesia which has helped Indonesia maintain the military occupation of East Timor. He drew parallels between East Timorese and native Canadians, both discriminated against in a colonial relationship. "The spirit of colonialism" will live on so long as humanity continues to subordinate human rights and the need to observe the environment, to materialism and economic gain. He called for the withdrawal of Indonesian forces and a free, open referendum. Human rights groups should have unconditional access to assess the situation independently. For a mechanism whereby East Timorese could freely express their will, he suggested the Western Sahara negotiations as a model. Canadian PET members plan to contribute to global efforts for justice in East Timor "with renewed vigour", to reverse Canada's "untenable and hypocritical" stance.

Laurie Ferguson (Canada) spoke in an unofficial capacity and did not represent government policy. On the population loss in East Timor, he said that if 2% population growth in 1975 when the population stood at 690,000 had continued, the population would now be over 930,000, whereas there are fewer than 650,000, including outsiders. "In relative terms this is a loss of population without equal in world trouble spots since the end of World War II". He referred to the Gadjah Mada University report which confirms that the authority of Timorese officials is titular; he felt the majority Indonesians would be against the occupation of East Timor since it was "a group of ABRI generals", not the Indonesian people who decided to invade East Timor.

He denied that East Timor has prospered under Indonesian rule; the wealth is controlled by Indonesians, not East

Timorese. Claims that East Timor is too small to be independent were dismissed; he cited examples of many smaller independent nations in the region such as Fiji. He criticised the Timor Gap Treaty between Indonesia and Australia for failing to provide a share of oil revenues with East Timor. Had it achieved independence and exploited its resources, East Timor might now be of similar economic standing as the tiny state of Brunei.

Rui Jose Santos Silva (Portugal) said the aims of the 16-year old democracy in Portugal had not been entirely fulfilled; its African colonies had exercised their right to self-determination but East Timor's rights were still violated, their lives taken and their future curtailed. He spoke of the warmth and generosity of the East Timorese during a 1973-74 visit; today, they refuse to give up their identity despite Indonesian atrocities. He assured the Committee Portugal would continue to safeguard their right to self-determination. Portugal had no wish to reoccupy East Timor, only to make it possible for them to freely determine their future.

Antonia Maria Pereira (Portugal) said the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait was a "carbon-copy" of the Indonesian invasion of East Timor, using the same justifications. At the time of Indonesia's invasion, the Security Council ordered Indonesia to withdraw as it did now in the case of the Iraqi action. How could some countries look benevolently on Indonesia's action but condemn Iraq? Why was Indonesia out of step with the global democratic trend which had spread since Portugal's revolution? The world must ensure that Indonesian genocide in Timor ceases; Indonesia must let the Timorese to exercise their right to self-determination.

Raul Fernando Souselo de Brito (Portugal) condemned the denial of the right to self-determination and the violation of other human rights in East Timor and said the Portuguese-Indonesian talks under UN auspices were aimed at finding a just solution to the problem of East Timor.

GENERALS VETO MPs VISIT

A report in the Portuguese press on 26 July revealed that army generals in charge of security in East Timor told the Australian ambassador, Philip Flood, on a recent visit to Dili, that a visit by Portuguese parliamentarians would provoke social unrest. They could not contemplate the visit taking place "for the next two or three years".

This cast doubt over the continuing efforts by Portugal to send a mission to East Timor.

UN SUB-COMMISSION RESOLUTION ON EAST TIMOR

For the second year running, on 30 August, the UN Sub-Commission on the Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, has adopted a resolution on East Timor. The text reads in full as follow:

The Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities,

Guided by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the universally accepted rules of international humanitarian law,

Noting the changing international situation which is conducive to dialogue and negotiations as the most adequate means of resolving local, national and interstate disputes,

Recalling General Assembly resolution 37/30 of 23 November 1982 and the unanimous Security Council resolution 394 of 22 December 1975 and 389 of April 1976,

Recalling its resolutions 1982/20 of 8 September 1082, 1983/26 of 6 September 1983, 1984/24 of 29 August 1984, 1987/13 of 2 September 1987 and 1989/7 of 31 August 1989 concerning the situation in East Timor,
people of East Timor continue to be subjected to gross violations of human rights,

Regretting the restrictions imposed by local military authorities upon the activities of specialised non-governmental organisations.

1. **Welcomes** and encourages the exercise by the Secretary-General of his good offices as mandated by General Assembly resolution 37/30 of 23 November 1982 with a view to exploring the avenues for finding a comprehensive solution to the problem of East Timor.

2. **Requests** the Indonesian authorities to facilitate the access to the territory of international humanitarian and development organisations.

3. **Appeals** to all sides to exercise restraint and, guided by the spirit of dialogue and negotiations, to co-operate fully with the Secretary-General in the exercise of his good offices with a view to finding a durable settlement of the conflict.

4. **Recommends** to the Commission that it consider, at its forty-seventh session, the situation pertaining to human rights and fundamental freedoms in East Timor and to this purpose asks the Secretariat to transmit to the Commission all the reliable information received.

SOCIALIST INTERNATIONAL RESOLUTION

The Socialist International Council Meeting, held in Cairo on 22-23 May this year, adopted the following resolution on East Timor:

East Timor remains an internationally unsolved problem.

The occupation of East Timor has been condemned not only by the United Nations General Assembly Security Council but by many other international organisations.

Human rights are daily violated: arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, forced resettlement, torture, summary executions, the absence of the right of association and of freedom of expression.

The Final Declaration of the Dublin EEC Foreign Ministers meeting last February recalls again the "disquieting reports of human rights violations" in East Timor.

The Socialist International condemns the continuing violation of human rights and the destruction of the cultural identity of the people of East Timor.

The Socialist International supports the right of self-determination of the people of East Timor.

TIMOR GAP TREATY UNDER ATTACK

In May, the Australian Parliament adopted the Petroleum Zone of Cooperation Bill and consequential amendments to a number of existing laws, clearing the way for implementation of the Timor Gap Treaty signed between Australia and Indonesia in December 1989 for the exploitation of oil and natural gas off the coast of East Timor which rightfully belongs to the people of East Timor.

The Treaty bills were adopted in the House of Representatives without opposition. In the Senate, where Australian Democrats and Independents have seats, the Treaty was criticised and a number of Senators voted against them.

Senator Macklin, leader of the Australian Democrats, said:

It is clear ... that, in extending de jure recognition in 1979 to the Indonesian takeover, Australia was concerned primarily with opening ways for negotiation on the Timor Gap.... In other words, Australia was not motivated by concern to help the East Timorese, but rather by expediting the exploration and exploitation of the vast resources of oil and gas that it knew lay beneath the Timor Gap.

While Australian politicians support independence for the Baltic states even though the seizure of those territories occurred over 50 years ago, "when it comes to the forcible seizure of territory 15 years ago, in our part of the world, what do we do? We sweep it under the carpet."

He felt Portugal should seek an opinion on the Treaty from the International Court of Justice. When Australia challenged French atomic testing in the Pacific, it insisted that no tests take place while the matter was in the hands of the Court. If Portugal brought the Treaty to the Court, Australia should abide by the same principle.

Senator Jo Vallentine for the Greens condemned the Treaty. If Portugal goes to the World Court and rules that the Treaty is illegal, "both Australia and Indonesia will have to decide whether or not to ignore the ruling. Such a decision would theoretically place Australia in a dilemma as it has been one of the few states to have voluntarily declared that it accepts the jurisdiction of this Court."

It was ironic that we were always being told that East Timor could not be a viable independent state economically yet, considering the vast oil and gas in the Gap, East Timor "might have the potential to be like Brunei or one of the Persian Gulf states, very small, yet independent and economically viable".

MURDANI ON KUWAIT

It is worth noting for the record that General Benny Murdani, now Minister of Defence and Security, who commanded the invasion of East Timor in 1975 and was in charge of military operations there for many years, has spoken out against Iraq's seizure of Kuwait. Asked by a member of Parliament about Indonesia's stand on the invasion of Kuwait, Murdani said: "I think Indonesia's position is clear. Indonesia regrets the seizure of small countries by large countries." [*Kompas* 12 September 1990.]

PARLIAMENTARIANS FOR EAST TIMOR

Parliamentarians for East Timor was launched in Lisbon in June 1988 by Lord Avebury (UK), Tony Lamb (Australia) and Satsuki Eda (Japan) to coordinate and promote activities in support of a just solution to the problem of East Timor in as many countries as possible.

PET bases its actions on the Declaration on Behalf of East Timor of June 1985 which won support from more than 450 parliamentarians from around the world. The group now has more than 200 members from Australia, Austria, Canada, German Federal Republic, Japan, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Sweden, the United Kingdom and a number of Members of the European Parliament.

Information please!

PET Newsletter hopes to include information about actions taken by members in their own Parliaments, on other political forums and at the UN. Please supply any information you have for inclusion in the next issue.

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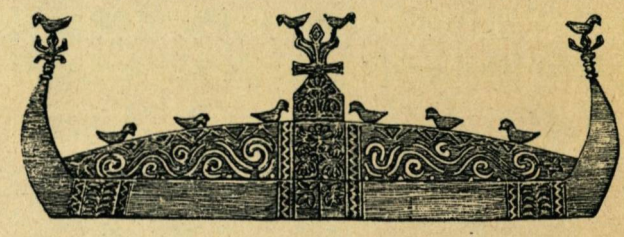

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Parliamentarians for East Timor

244A Upper Street, London N1 1RU

Recc. em 16/5/94 N.º 188/90
Resp. em ___/___/___ N.º ___

The Newsletter has been sent to all PET members.

Thanks for your note about Manuela Aguiar. We are trying for another appointment with

With the Compliments

of

Carmel Budiardjo

Founder Members
Satsuki Eda MHR (Japan), Tony Lamb MHR (Australia), Lord Avebury (UK)
Secretary: Carmel Budiardjo

de Cuellar but no reply yet
fra N. York. We've proposed
Friday 26 October, or
Friday 2 November
Best wishes
Carmel

I don't have
a fax no for
Mourelos A.